

# Technology in Rural Transportation

A recent study documented more than eighty proven, cost-effective “low-tech” solutions to rural transportation needs, most developed and implemented by local transportation professionals. One of the solutions is outlined below:



Learn all about the simple solutions on the Internet at <http://inform.enterprise.prog.org>

The simple solutions report is available from Hau To at (503) 892-2533, or email: [to@crc-corp.com](mailto:to@crc-corp.com)

## Flashing Stop/Slow Paddles

<b>Overall goal:</b>	To improve work zone safety by using equipment that will better grab a driver's attention, increasing the chance that drivers will realize the need to slow down.
<b>Technical approach:</b>	<p>Similar to paddles commonly used by flaggers at work zones, the flashing stop/slow paddle has high-intensity lamps mounted on the "stop" side of the paddle. When the flagger presses a button on the handle, the lights flash quickly in a short sequence.</p> <p>The department obtained 12 flashing stop/slow paddles and distributed 2 to each of its 6 districts. Reports from crews using the devices were positive. The crews said the paddle made them feel safer because the flashing lights did appear to get motorists' attention. The flaggers liked the fact that the batteries were housed in the sign pole, which kept the paddle's center of gravity low and made it easier to use.</p>
<b>Current status:</b>	While tests of the paddles returned favorable results, the department is considering requiring highway contractors to use the paddles.
<b>Location / geographic scope:</b>	The paddles were tested in all six of New Mexico's districts.
<b>Agencies involved:</b>	New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department, Strategic Highway Research Program/ Federal Highway Administration.
<b>Cost information:</b>	\$95 to \$400 per unit. Additionally, the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Research and Operations Office has developed its own paddle that is available for \$325 from Minncor Industries, 800.646.6267.
<b>Key contacts:</b>	John Tenison, New Mexico Highway and Transportation Department.



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**Have goals been achieved?**

505.827.5649; or Peter Hatzi, FHWA, 202.366.8036.

Yes. Anecdotal evidence collected from work crews indicated that the flashing paddles did have a slowing effect on motorists.

**Solution timeline:**

This device has been tested and deployed by numerous states since 1994.

